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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

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The late Edmond Kelly, in his recently published book on Nineteenth Century Socialism, looks forward to the time when, by the elimination of competition and its attendant enormous waste, men will be able to live comfortably—more comfortably than they live now—on an average of not more than four hours labor per day per individual. When we note the enormous strides that have been made in the organization of society during the last century, it is perhaps not chimerical to look forward to an early realization of some of the socialistic dreams. Whether the amount of work necessary to keep the world going will be restricted to four hours a day or not is immaterial; it will be much restricted in any case.

Now what are people to do with their remaining time? For, after liberal allowances are made for sleeping, eating, and the care of the body, there will still remain perhaps as much as eight hours per day of idleness. It is an old adage that 'Satan finds work for idle hands to do'. Philanthropists and practical reformers have maintained persistently that the reason why the laboring man patronizes the saloon so constantly is because it is in a way the poor man's club and they try to meet the difficulty by establishing working men's clubs with an appeal to the saner side of man's nature, but their success compared with the success of the saloons is not striking, and the answer as to why this is true is easy and evident. The ordinary laboring man goes to the saloon rather than to the workingman's club because the saloon fits him better than the club. In other words, when the laboring man is through with his labor he has no means of occupying his leisure time that appeals to him except that which has to do with the satisfaction of his grosser senses. This is the result of his education. In the new regime, when he has eight hours per day of leisure, what is he going to do with it? Is he going to spend that in watching baseball games? Will he spend his evenings in the theater? Will he engage in riotous conduct, simply because he has nothing to do? He certainly will do something of this kind, if he has nothing better to do. What provision does our modern system of education make for the leisure moments of a man? It provides him with the means of making a living, which is good so far as it goes, for no man is a criminal while he works. Work and crime are practically incompatible.

But far more is needed. Now, if any preparation at all is to be made for the future, it must be made in the line of providing man's intelligence, not the sensual part of his nature, with the means of gratification, and we shall not provide man's intellect with the means of gratification by cutting out of our system of education all, or even a great deal of that which has to do with his spiritual life. The best preparation for the enjoyment of leisure is good habits of reading and a taste for good literature. This in some minds is inborn, but in the case of many it may be gained by training, and this training must be done in the schools.

In a small book entitled *How to Save Greek and other Paradoxes of Oxford Reform*, Mr. T. C. SNOW, late Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, makes a number of interesting and some valuable suggestions; but in the second chapter, *Why Greek should be saved*, his words are of such importance for our present problem, that they deserve to be quoted.

Not on the ground of anything in Greek itself, but through exceptional and factitious conditions which have prevailed in England for less than two centuries, our more vigorous and bitter reformers have come to regard Greek as the badge of a privileged class, which can learn elegant accomplishments because it has not to get its own living.

These peculiar and factitious conditions are coming to an end. Greek is ceasing to be a badge of the upper and middle classes. They are just the people who are agitating against it. . . . The practical pressure comes from 'respectable' parents who want their sons to be trained for medicine, and engineering, and manufactures and so on, with the minimum of non-professional study, and yet to come to Oxford for 'social influences'. The theoretical pressure comes from the pseudo-Darwinian theorists who are trying to erect the biological generalization that the fittest survive into a social commandment that only the comfortable classes shall be allowed to be fit. . . . Whatever it (Greek) may have been in the past, it will be less and less a means of 'rising to offices of honour and emolument' in the future. The studies that lead to 'rising' now are those that 'have money in them', as the phrase is, and those are chiefly scientific. The literary studies require to be protected by Universities just because they have 'no money in them'. The time when plutocrats are attacking Greek is the time for socialists to take it up.

For indeed, so long as there continue to be rich and poor (and probably that will last as long as the life of the youngest of mankind now living, in spite of all our efforts), literary studies ought to be the studies of the poor. They are the best way, as I believe, and certainly the cheapest and most portable way, of satisfying the mental and spiritual wants

of life. People must satisfy those wants somehow, just as they must satisfy their bodily wants, *panem et circenses*. It depends on their education whether they are to get their *circenses* out of gambling and fighting and drinking, or at best out of sport and mere frivolity, or out of religion and knowledge of art and politics and poetry and humor and love,—in short out of the components of literature. As Bishop Fraser's friend told him, 'Drink is the shortest way out of Ancoats'. Give Ancoats the chance and Ancoats will find out that Homer is a better way.

Consider the fact that so scandalizes Mr. Mallock (Nineteenth Century, July 1906, p. 211), that the Labour members, giving lists of the books that had done most for them, never mentioned any books on the science or practice of their trades, but always economists, poets, prophets,—Carlyle, Ruskin, Bunyan, Mill, Karl Marx. As he says, 'No single one has any bearing whatever on the practical processes of production'. Mr. Mallock is not quite fair; the question was not what books they had read, nor what books had been technically useful to them, but what books had inspired them. But he is right in noting the significance of the fact. It means that they have grasped, intuitively and under the pressure of life, the necessity of a literary education.

We are told that education is to be 'practical'. Certainly. That education is 'practical' which deals with the objects most certain to be met with in life, and those objects are human beings; the science of understanding them, the art of dealing with them, is what we mean by literature. Those studies are practical which have the practical effect of shaping the character for the practical purpose of human intercourse, of making us more flexible, more imaginative, more humorous, straighter thinkers, and more pleasant companions.

So the education of the poor must be literary. And, of all literary studies, Greek has a special message for the poor man. It is the record of a high civilization, accompanied with few material wants. In a cold country, the Greek 'plain living and high thinking' cannot be imitated literally; but in spirit and *mutatis mutandis*, it can be made our ideal. The poorer the gifted man is, the more instinctively he will take to it; the man with a quick imagination and vivid emotions, just as he now takes to Tennyson and Carlyle, the man with a turn for speculation and intellectual construction, just as he now takes to Haeckel and Karl Marx.

... Shew them what it is, and they will refuse to do without it, at least for their children.

Greek to most of those who get this benefit must be more or less second-hand, a matter of translation and popular exposition. But that, if it is to be widespread, implies a corresponding spread of first-hand knowledge. If ten thousand people are to be edified by second-hand Greek, it can only be through the mediation of one hundred of their own class who know something of first-hand Greek.

It cannot be denied that we have to meet a strong attack against Greek. How shall we defend it? Not by mere inertia, the support of the *status quo*. That may be effective for the present, it is suicidal for the future. ... We must defend it aggressively, not apologetically. We must not merely say 'Greek is very interesting, when you know enough of it, and it does no harm even to know a little of it, and we have all these boys to keep out of mischief,

and we have got into the habit of teaching them a little Greek, and we only want to be left alone'. We must go out into the world, and say to people generally, 'Too few of you know Greek, and you lose by not knowing it, and it is the business of Oxford and Cambridge to see that you get to know it'. We must convert the popular demand to come to Oxford without it into a popular demand to be taught it. When that demand comes, we must meet its opportunity; in the meanwhile we must be the jealous guardians of the poor man's present small openings towards Greek, we must see that they are not diminished, as they certainly will be if we let him come in without it. G. L.

REFLECTIONS ON THE TEACHING OF THE CLASSICS.

(Concluded from page 77).

The remaining pages of Mr. Grandgent's paper are concerned with pedagogical matters phrased with special reference to the teaching of German and French. But here also the alert teacher of the Classics may find much of service to himself. Let me quote again (530):

Our young school-children need constant oversight. They are often left too much to their own devices. For instance, after they have had a few lessons in grammar, a bit of German is assigned to them to translate at home. This is a task for which they are totally unfit. To ask them to do it is to put upon them the work that belongs to the teacher. For a long time, all, or nearly all, the new reading or translation should be done in the classroom, and the pupil's home lesson should be a review. The same thing is true of grammar: very few children are capable of assimilating linguistic principles from a book until the rules and examples have been carefully expounded by the living voice. The bane of much of our instruction is that the master does not teach—he "hears lessons". Vigilant watch must be kept, also, to prevent the child from falling into error through ignorance of English. This applies not only to the interpretation of grammatical statements, but likewise, and still more, to the translation of foreign texts. It is impossible, without the closest and most sympathetic attention, to imagine what idea a common English word may suggest to the youthful mind. I remember that in a German class which I was visiting a little girl translated the German *schlau* by *pretty*. Her teacher corrected, rebuked, and passed on. Wondering how the child got such a notion I turned to the vocabulary of the reader, and there I found the definition, *schlau* = *cunning*. The only meaning that this child, or almost any American of her years, ever attached to *cunning* was *pretty*. A large proportion of the faulty translation that so vexes teachers is due merely to lack of familiarity with English words; and for this the child is seldom to blame.

Mr. Grandgent finally considers at length (532 ff.) the question of the teaching of pronunciation. Recently, I received a letter asking what the attitude of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY is toward the subject of pronunciation. I promised that as soon as possible the subject should be discussed in an editorial. Yet, after all, there is little to be said, in 1910, on the subject. The pronunciation of a word is a vital part of that word; the pronunciation must be taught.